Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: January – March 2018 Issue date: 15.12.17

The forecast presented here is for January and the average of the January-February-March period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for January will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather /forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 1 January 2018.

This forecast is based on information from observations, several numerical prediction systems and expert judgement.

SUMMARY – PRECIPITATION:

For January, and January-February-March as a whole, above-average precipitation is more likely than below-average precipitation. The likelihood of impacts from heavy rainfall and high winds is greater than usual.

The probability that UK-average precipitation for January-February-March will fall into the driest of our five categories is 15% and the probability that it will fall into the wettest of our five categories is 30% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

As discussed in the temperature section, signals from the Met Office long-range prediction system and other systems from prediction centres around the world show an increased likelihood of cyclonic weather patterns during the outlook period. These types of weather pattern favour wetter-than-average conditions for the UK.
The outlook for both January and January-February-March therefore shows an increased likelihood of above-average precipitation (see figure P2). There remains a chance of drier-than-average conditions, although this is less likely. The greater likelihood of cyclonic weather patterns also indicates an increased chance of windy or even stormy conditions. The likelihood of impacts from heavy rainfall and high winds is greater than usual.

Fig P1

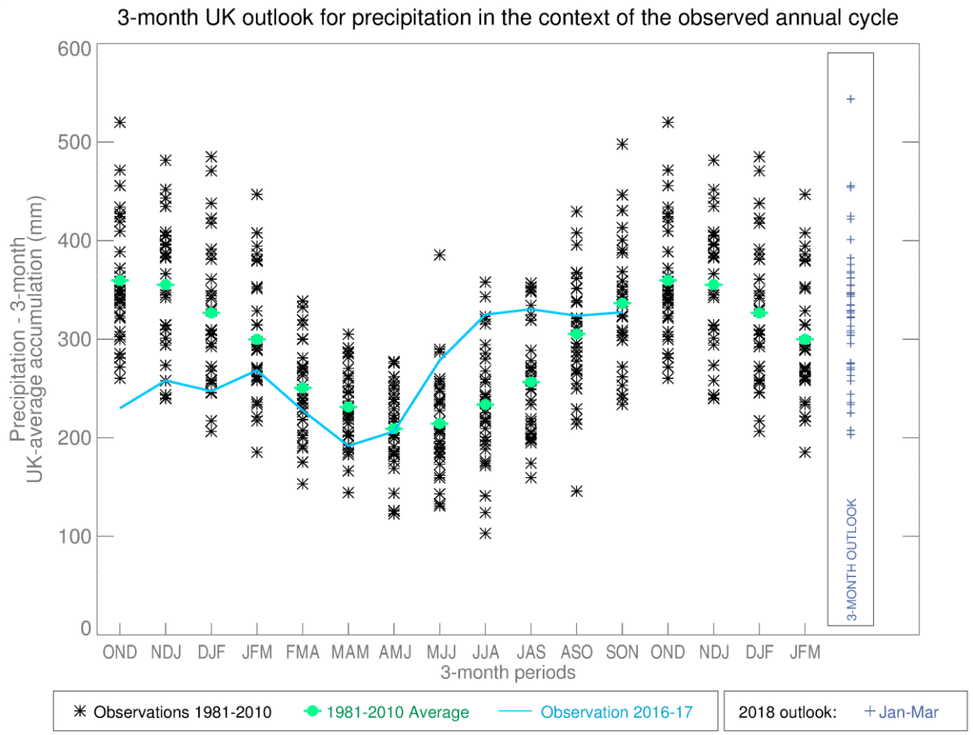


Fig P2

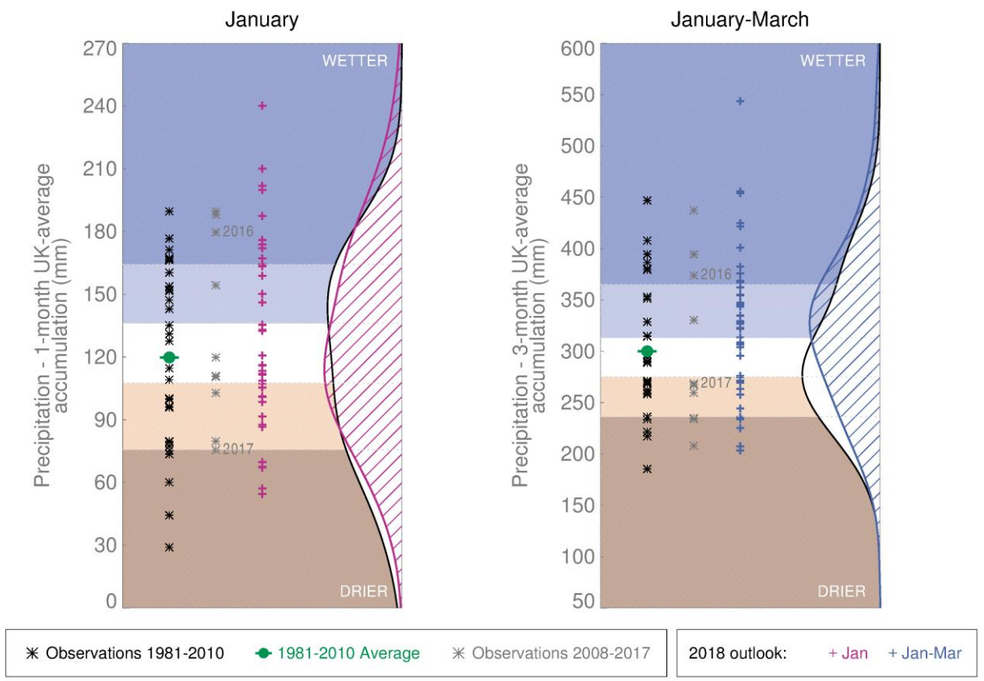
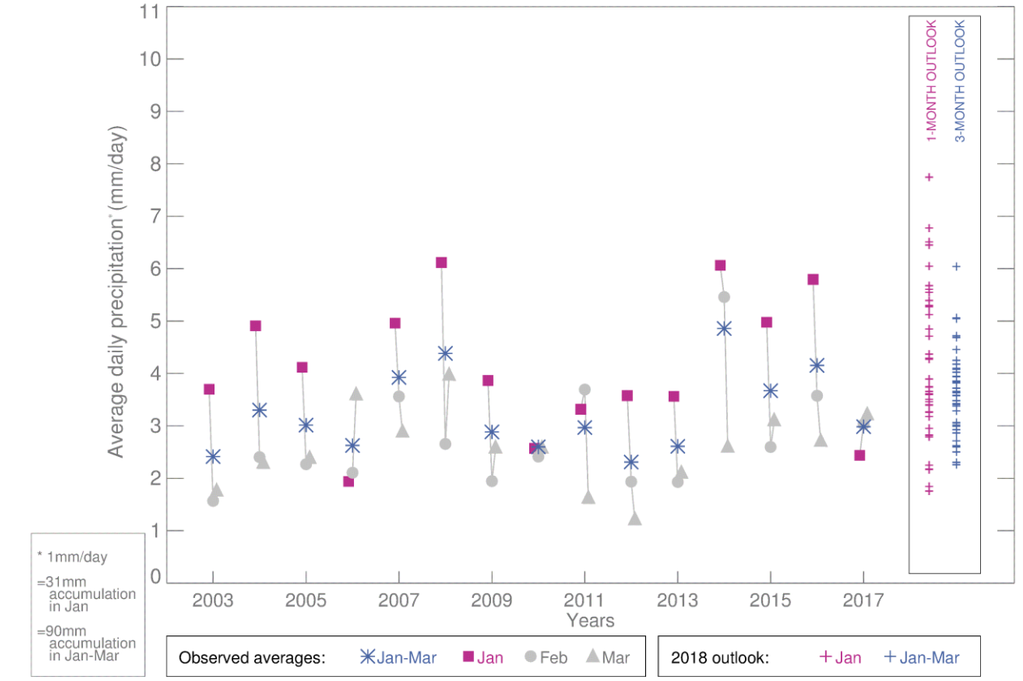


Fig P3


1-month and 3-month UK outlook for precipitation in the context of recent climatology: year-to-year and within-season variability
Average daily precipitation (mm/day)
1-MONTH OUTLOOK
3-MONTH OUTLOOK
* 1mm/day
=31mm accumulation in Jan
=90mm accumulation in Jan-Mar
2003 2005 2007 2009 2011 2013 2015 2017
Years
Observed averages: Jan-Mar Jan Feb Mar
2018 outlook: +Jan +Jan-Mar

This Outlook provides an indication of possible temperature and rainfall conditions over the next 3 months. It is part of a suite of forecasts designed for contingency planners.

The Outlook should not be used in isolation but should be used with shorter-range and more detailed (30-day, 15-day and 1-to-5-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.